Meagher

To Sylvia Meagher (and by carbons Paul Hoch, Howard Roffman 2/3/78
and Jim Lesar, from Harold Weisberg

While the conditions of my life have precluded my taking time to sit down and detach myself from all other thoughts and work out to my own satisfaction that about which I write I believe it is necessary to write and for all of us to face what may become a serious question for all and one of deep personal concerns to some.

Regardless of the provisions of law and in my case by violating the law the FBI has made available much defamatory information. Misinformation. In my case gross fabrications. I anticipated it would do this. When my own pursuit of the rights we all have was ignored by the FBI and the DJ I asked Jim to make a written advance record of my insistence on enjoying these rights.

When and as we can we will be doing what we can about this. My present concern is not about myself. As this nazism relates to me my only interest at the moment and relating to others is to be informed about any records that have been released. Retrieving any in 60,000 is not easy. By citation I can because I have them.

Others will be asking me for copies. Some have already. Others will be going over these records, without my supervision. Two reporters have already.

I would like to be in a position to refer all requests for records about any critic to each critic, with the understanding that each would make copies available together with any accompanying statement each might want to have considered along with the FBI's concoctions. Under the Privacy Act they were required to permit opportunity to respond or rebut. They saw to it that this was impossible for me and I suspect for all. In my case I took the initiative beginning in 1975 and I did, repeatedly, invoke the Act. They are in violation. I do not know what if anything others have done along this line. But I do think it is only fair to assure a means for this still to be done where public use is involved in the present and historical considerations may be involved in the future.

I write you because I have been told that there are such records on you and because Ted Gandolfo has already asked me for some records on critics. He proposes to I suppose expose the distiness in all of this. I have not asked what use he intend.

I would much prefer to send you a set of the records on you and have you be able to provide anything you might want to provide to accompany the records. I would also like to have a copy of any such statement to file with those records, for present and for permanent uses when they are at the university.

It will not be easy for me to locate and provide copies. To a large degree I will have to be given citations to them by others. There is no possibility that their arrogances of the AIB will do this because they refused to respond when I made such a request for uses in court. As they may inform Paul Hoch I am without doubt that he, in turn, will be informative. And to a limited degree I will learn from the media as I am asked and/or consulted about these records. George Lardner asked me about some relating to me of which I had not heard as recently as yesterday afternoon. He will send me copies of those he has seen and by the identifications on those copies I'll be able to locate the surrounding records.

Some of the stuff on me is pretty farout. They learned well from Hitler or by then were so advanced he could teach them little.

We have some limitations that I would like others to understand. And if you did not know I obtained the second batch without fee by court order.

I have cleared space in our basement and have a special area for these records, in a separate row of file cabinets. The records and are will be in the form in which I received them, bound by Sections with Acco clips. My wife along takes them apart for copying. There are reasons but the one I think is comprehensible enough is to guarantee their preservation in the form in which I received them. She takes them apart only for making copies for others, after which they are in the same conditions as when she began.

Under any conditions providing both access and copies will present us with added burdens. We will do all we can but we would want durdensomeness reduced to the minimum. I have more accumulated work than ever and can't begin to keep up with what i must do relating to FOIA litigation alone. This time of the year my wife is busy full-time on tax work. She is now farthur behind because of assistance given to others for a two-day period.

One way in which it is possible to minimize this is for each who will want copies of personal records to request a list of the citations on the FBI index to central files at FBI HQ. They are required to respond within 10 days, plus time for mail. In 12 days one can appeal, and after 20 more can file a complaint in federal court. However, I suggest that for those who do not want to go to court and who do not want to ask the FBI for copies under PA the best course is to ask for the citations on the indexes. They are not required to generate new records but they are required to provide copies of existing records. I'd offer to accept a list as an alternative to copies of the index cards, which they'd probably find some excuse for refusing.

If I did not get a response in 10 days I'd appeal and at the same time talk to my Congressmen and Senators, asking they then demand compliance of the FBI and that each register a protest with the AG, who is long past the time where, given good intent, he should have been informed of the lawlessness of his law-enforcement agency.

What I am saying is that I don't want my wife to have to go over the same records time and time again to make copies. (Even walking the steps is sometimes not easy for her. And any refiling is an added burden when we are so overloaded.)

What I will do is make separate files as I come across any records so that those can be retrieved easily. As I learn of Sections in which there are such records I will segregate them until I can review them myself. I will then designate copies to be made. These copies also will go to the same separate file, so that over a period of time I will be accumulating some of these nasty personal records. This will provide a check against completeness in the future. It also will enable some access where there is emergency need.

As others want access to other records I will do all I possibly can. This week my wife and I took much time to facilitate this, time we do not have. We will be doing all we can in the future, probably the only refusals being to nutty or other counter-productive requests. I have some plans that are formulating with uses.

There is a college student who has a car and lives nearby and who I have been able to get to do some work at a nominal $3.00 an hour. Her next project will be to refile the records used by this week's reporters. As she does this she will make a list of the records she refiles. She will also make a 3/x5 card on each record and add the name of the reporters. Thus we will know that however hastily they reviewed those records. Others may prefer not to examine those or may want to write or speak to those reporters about what they noted.

While I have other ideas I have no time for going into them now. Please excuse my not being able to read and correct this. It is close to mailtime and there is 125 yards of edge-to-edge ice in my lane. Hope you are well and happy.

Sincerely,